

THE NEW JERSEY TEACHER QUALITY INITIATIVE

Building on Standards-Based Reforms

**State of New Jersey
Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants Program
Title II, Higher Education Act
Performance Report
June 2, 2003**

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II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The intent of New Jersey's Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant is to increase student achievement by ensuring that all teachers receive high quality preparation and induction support that is comprehensive, coherent and aligned with state and national standards. It is a sound goal combining the enhancement of teacher quality with three program strands concentrating in the areas of the higher education teacher preparation, alternate route, and mentoring.

Higher education is seeking the redesign of teacher preparation programs in institutions of higher education in New Jersey to align with professional standards. The goal of the alternate route strand is to strengthen and expand the alternate route program through standards-based reform and the creation of innovative pre-service training. An increase in teacher retention and student achievement is the goal of the mentoring strand by providing systemic induction level mentoring support from trained mentors.

Each strand of the grant project is currently in the early stages of planning that will enhance the achievement of the grant's work plan objectives. Preliminary planning, research of best practices, review of state policies and guidelines, preparing of required documents such as Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), Referendums for Performance (RFP), and Notice of Grant Opportunities(NGO), hiring of key personnel, contracting project evaluators, creating discussions and focus groups have been the emphasis for Year 1.

Although significant efforts are being made to create strong foundations for the accomplishment of grant activities, the project itself has had a slow beginning. Our challenges have included internal procedures that have caused delays in the allocation of grant monies, hiring of grant-related staff members, contracting project evaluators, document processing, and alignment of grant program activities.

The New Jersey Department of Education is also in the process of comprehensively revising its licensing regulations by repealing existing New Jersey Administrative Code 6:11 and proposing the adoption of a new chapter, *N.J.A.C* 6A:9. The adoption of professional standards for teachers and establishment of national accreditation partnerships will codify the new regulations. There is a direct relationship between the goals of the grant and the adoption of code which is scheduled for December 2003. As a result of the state's focus on professional standards, the new rules will fundamentally alter how teachers, school leaders, and other school personnel will be prepared, mentored and trained to fulfill educational responsibilities.

As directed by Program Office, Kathy Price, emphasis will be placed on objectives noted in Year 2 of the grant project. New Jersey's first year quartiles will consist of exerting positive efforts to establish basic fundamentals that will support work-plan objectives. Staff members will continue preliminary planning, research, preparation and writing of required documents, procedures to hire personnel, and creation of focus groups for stakeholder input.

For clarity purposes, the following performance report has been divided among the grant's three program strands: higher education, alternate route and mentoring.

HIGHER EDUCATION

III. Project Status

Goal: To increase the quality of teacher preparation in New Jersey's institutions of higher education.

Objective 1: Reforming the State System Guiding Teacher Preparation

- **Adopt standards for novice teachers modeled after the INTASC standards.**

Status: In order to accomplish a standards-based reform of the state's system for regulating teacher preparation in New Jersey institutions of higher education, the state is in the process of adopting teaching standards that are modeled after the INTASC standards. Professional standards for teachers will be required for use in the accreditation of teacher preparation programs, the recommendation of a teacher candidate for certification, and the approval of professional development for teachers. The professional standards for teachers developed by the New Jersey Professional Teaching Standards Board (NJPTSB) are included in the proposed administrative code expected to be adopted December 2003. The administrative code document is currently before the State Board at the third discussion level. The teaching standards are contained in the Professional Standards for Teachers by reference *N.J.A.C. 6A: Subchapter 3, 3.32* (pgs 10-19).

- **Adopt standards for teacher education programs modeled after the NCATE program folio standards system.**

Status: Standards for teacher education programs modeled after NCATE and other national learned societies will be included with the adoption of national accreditation *N.J.A.C. 6A:9.5 Subchapter 12* (pg. 67). Higher education institutions who prepare educators shall ensure

that their professional education programs meet accreditation through the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) or any other national professional education accreditation body approved by the Commissioner.

- **Provide NJ State Incentive Stipends to 25 campus-based teacher preparation departments in the 21 institutions of higher education for the purpose of aligning programs with the teacher and program standards as well as the P-12 NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards.**

Status: The Bureau of Higher Education Quality Initiatives is in the process of securing needed information in order to distribute the university stipends. Stipends are expected to be distributed in July 2003. The Bureau sent a letter to institutions of higher education with instructions to submit the number of students who successfully completed their approved undergraduate and graduate programs for initial licensure for the period from July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002. All institutions have responded. The number of successful initial program completers will help to complete the distribution stipend formula of \$6250 per college with an additional \$100 per instructional completer. In accordance with the allocation of stipends, a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted for distribution purposes (see attached). The Memorandum of Understanding must be reviewed by the NJDOE grants office and the NJDOE budget and accounting office before distribution of funding can be finalized. Staff members of the Bureau of Higher Education Quality Initiatives met with the NJDOE fiscal office and grants office to discuss details of the MOU process.

Objective 2: Redesigning a Comprehensive Review System

- **Establishing national accreditation partnerships with NCATE and TEAC.**

Status: The second objective of the higher education component of the project states that the New Jersey Department of Education will create and institute a redesigned comprehensive review system for program approval based on standards and incorporates an option for national accreditation. Stated within the New Jersey Administrative Code, New Jersey will establish a national accreditation partnership with NCATE and TEAC or any other national professional education accreditation body approved by the Commissioner. Lois Smith, Manager, Bureau of Higher Education Quality Initiatives is in the process of developing a partnership document with TEAC. Seven New Jersey institutions are already NCATE accredited with several others higher education institutions interested in NCATE accreditation. An accountability system will be established to strengthen the teacher preparation program approval system through a state NCATE partnership.

- The New Jersey Department of Education has proposed code changes that will mandate that all New Jersey institutions of higher education preparing professional educators obtain national accreditation. If adopted, there will be no state system of comprehensive review. Colleges will have the option of choosing either NCATE or TEAC accreditation. Through either system, the teacher preparation colleges will have to have met both state and national standards and requirements in order to obtain state-mandated, standards-based national accreditation.
- If the draft code is adopted, the comprehensive review system will consist of mandated national accreditation through either TEAC or NCATE. Once adopted, the Department of Education will establish progress points that will include benchmarks such as declaring the college's choice of national accreditation system, completion of the formal application, submission of the self-study

or brief, site visit date, and timeline for achieving accreditation. By June 2005, therefore, the state will have achieved its goal to have created a system that is standards-based and national accreditation-oriented with national accreditation agencies in place.

Objective 3: Increasing Teacher Preparation Quality through Innovation.

Status:

- Planning has begun by the Bureau of Higher Education Quality Initiatives to establish focus groups from New Jersey's traditional teacher preparation programs to promote research-based innovation to increase student achievement.
- The awarding of three to six New Jersey Higher Education Innovative Grants to teacher preparation institutions will be addressed in Years 2 and 3 of the grant.

Objective 4: Promoting Progress by Ensuring Dialogue Among Stakeholders.

Status:

- A Governor's Summit will be established within Year 2 of the grant project.
- A state higher education advisory group that represents key stakeholders will be established in Year 2 of the grant project. In planning for the state advisory group, the Bureau has begun contacting key stakeholders of major New Jersey educational associations and higher education institutions to serve as members of the committee.
- Focus groups of stakeholders have been formed to discuss the credits to standards movement. A working focus group has been formed by Lois Smith to discuss the transforming of a credit-based system to a standards-based process.

- Mechanisms for focused electronic networking among stakeholders will be established with the hiring of evaluators for all strands of the project. The Bureau of Higher Education Quality Initiatives has met with Bob Goertz, NJDOE Director of Finance, for guidance in writing an RFP for the purpose of hiring four evaluators for the grant project. An electronic communication network with website links will be made available by New Jersey Professional Education Port (NJPEP) in conjunction with the evaluator's data, surveys, questionnaires, and conclusive information.

The Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant proposal specified the hiring of a teacher preparation consultant who will assist the Bureau of Higher Education Quality Initiatives in accomplishing the ultimate goal of the grant. Lois Smith met with Sharon Sherman, Chair of Department of Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education, The College of New Jersey to discuss her appointment. Meetings with NJDOE personnel and NJDOE financing staff members have occurred to explore the possibility of hiring Dr. Sherman as a sole-source provider of services.

IV. Budgeting

A distribution stipend formula of \$6250 per institution of higher education with an additional \$100 per instructional completer has been allocated for institutions of higher education to align their teacher preparation programs with teaching standards. In accordance with the objective, a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted for distribution purposes. The initial count for distribution purposes will approximate \$636,250.

V. Supplemental Information

Please see the follow attachments:

- Proposed Professional Licensure and Standards Administrative Code
- Initial Program Completer Letter
- Draft Higher Education Memorandum of Understanding

ALTERNATE ROUTE

III. Project Status

Goal: To strengthen and expand the alternate route program through standards based reform and the creation of innovative pre-service training.

Objective 1: Participate in the development of national standards for alternate route preparation through participation in INTASC.

Status: Not applicable. INTASC has not yet developed standards for an alternate route program, and the funds allocated for the objective have not been used.

In February 2003, the department submitted a proposed Licensure and Professional Standards Code which includes standards for alternate route candidates to the State Board of Education for approval. The proposed code is now going through a mandated period of public comment and board review. Target date for approval is December 2003.

Objective 2: Research current state of alternate route programs and outcomes.

Status: Revision of approval process for IHE and LEA providers to include evaluative component. Approval of programs of formal instruction must include evidence of immediate outcomes and progress over time.

- Developed new protocols for IHEs and LEAs to include evaluative component.
- Held technical assistance meetings on March 25, 2003 and April 4, 2003 to interested potential providers.

Approval for New Jersey to participate in a national two-year study of alternative teacher certification programs by SRI International. The study is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York to broaden the research base about effective AR programs and help inform policies that affect certification.

For the above reasons, a requirement of the addition of evaluative pieces has been added to the approval process for providers of alternate route programs. New Jersey is one of seven states participating in a national study of alternate route programs by SRI International. The funds allocated for research on alternate route programs have not been expended to date.

Objective 3: To develop alternate route option with pre-service component.

Status: With the revision of the approval process, alternate route instructional providers will design and develop a pre-service component of the initial 80 hours of formal instruction.

- Discussions began with the March 25 and April 4, 2003 meeting. It was suggested that a pre-service “survival skills” instructional unit of study be developed and made available

for all holders of Certificates of Eligibility prior to assuming full responsibility of a classroom.

- An RFP has been drafted and made available in spring 2003 for pilot programs to be developed and implemented by interested providers to redesign preparation to include pre-service education and experience as part of the 200 hours of instruction.
- Eight interested providers met on May 20, 2003 to develop the standard curriculum for the 20-hour pre-service option which will be offered this summer. They are currently developing the scope and sequence and schedules for the program which most plan to offer initially in late July or August.
- With the revision of the approval process, alternate route instructional providers will design and develop a curriculum based on the New Jersey Professional Teacher Standards.
 - Discussions on March 25 and April 4, 2003 alerted interested providers with the need to revise the present curriculum based on the Boyer Topics to the standards-based design.
 - An RFP will be developed in preparation for the 2004-2005 academic year. It will offer funds to providers to develop and implement a revised curriculum.
 - The RFP will be available in fall 2003.
 - Included in the RFP will be a request for a proposal also to refine and further develop a pre-service experience to include clinical experiences.

REVISED WORK PLAN

Activity	Benchmark	Timeline	Responsible parties
Objective 1: Approving standards for AR teachers	Approval by State Board of Education	2 Q, Y 2	Code writing committee, State Board
Objective 2: Research regional training centers and consortia	Surveys for regional staff, students	Year 2	SRI
Objective 2: Research effectiveness of regional training center and consortia instruction	Diverse evaluation products developed by providers as part of the approval process for operating regional training centers	Year 2, Q 3, ongoing	Providers
Objective 3: Pilot the development of a pre-service component of the AR	Pre-service experiences scheduled and operating	Year 1, Q	AR Coordinator
Objective 3: RFP for development of a pre-service component of the AR that includes a clinical experience	Published RFP	Year 2, Q 2	AR Coordinator

IV. BUDGET INFORMATION

The department is requesting approval to use the \$60,000 allocated for INTASC and research to support the IHE and LEA providers of the pre-service component and to hire clerical staff to handle the increase in communication with individuals and districts, registrations, and placement in classes of pre-service candidates. Specifically, this would include stipends of \$4,000 to each provider (80 hours per provider x \$50=\$4,000 x 12 providers= \$48,000) for coordinating the development and piloting of the programs. Additional clerical staff are needed (clerks x \$8.50

per hour x 35 hours x 10 weeks = \$5,059) to process the registrations of candidates wishing to enroll in the pre-service phase and are asking for two clerks to work from July 1- Sept 15.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Please see attached:

- Alternate Route sample letter of interest.
- Protocol
- Proposal
- Memorandum of Understanding

MENTORING

III. Project Status

Mentoring Support Goal: To increase teacher retention and student achievement by providing systemic induction-level mentoring support from trained mentors.

Objective 1: To coordinate and ensure high-quality mentor training statewide. The state will undertake three activities to accomplish this objective.

1. Establish a mentor training coordinator position at the Department of Education.
2. Provide half-time clerical support for the mentor training coordinator.
3. Compile and disseminate information on research-based best practices.

Status: In March 2003, the Office of Academic and Professional Standards hired a mentor training coordinator. This staff member's duties were to include oversight of the mentoring support strand of this project. In May 2003, the staff member left the position for early retirement. Another mentor training coordinator is due to be hired this month. As of March 2003, a half-time clerical support person has been assigned to the project and has been assisting in the administrative support duties.

Regarding the compilation and dissemination of information on research-based best practices, please note the following accomplishments:

- Initiation of a study for mentoring on effective mentoring practices with the 15 pilot school districts. Baseline data will be collected as part of the evaluation on mentoring and professional development conducted by consultants contracted with the department.
- Discussions with other state education representatives to identify state level support, policies and practices on the mentoring process.
- Revision of state policies, regulations and mentoring program guidelines to align with new standards and best practices.
- Review of on-line research of national and state mentoring programs.
- Visit to institutions of higher education to assess current programs for mentor teachers in higher education
- Initial discussions with the New Jersey Education Association who collaborated with DOE regarding the statewide pilot district mentoring project.
- Establishment of a focus group of local public school district mentor coordinators.
- Initial discussions and planning with coordinator of the department's Virtual Academy: New Jersey Professional Education Port (NJPEP) to establish a web site and related computer technology resources to include on-line mentoring training programs, tutorials, and videoconferencing.
- Initial discussions and meeting with staff from the National Staff Development Council (NSDC).

The following activities are planned for June 1, 2003 through August 31, 2003:

- A statewide summit of the 15 pilot districts to showcase best practices.
- Continued collaboration with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) to assist in the design of mentor training provider criteria, materials and training.
- A meeting with the consultant from Rutgers University-The State University to discuss the goals and objectives for project evaluation.
- Alignment of current mentoring requirements with teaching standards.
- Continued collaboration with the New Jersey Professional Teaching Standards Board (NJPTSB) to address 1) planning for county and local school professional development committee support; and 2) the development of mentoring guidelines that link to the new teaching standards.
- Continued collaboration with NJPEP for the Virtual Academy on-line mentoring resources.

Objective 2: To ensure that all New Jersey school districts have mentoring plans that are aligned with best practices.

The state will undertake five activities to accomplish this objective:

1. Conduct regional training for LEAs to guide development of mentoring plans.
2. Develop implementation guide to support mentoring plan development.
3. Provide access to training materials on the DOE web site.
4. Develop mentoring plan approval matrix.
5. Conduct training on use of plan approval matrix for county superintendents.

Status: These five activities will be addressed in Year Two of the project. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) will assist in the training and development of the implementation guide and materials. The New Jersey Professional Teaching Standards Board (NJPTSB) will collaborate on the development of the approval matrix and facilitation of training to the county superintendents. The New Jersey Professional Education Port (NJPEP) will continue to assist in the access of web-based training materials and resources as part of the Virtual Academy.

Objective 3: To establish minimum criteria for mentor training. The state will undertake three activities to accomplish this objective:

1. Develop minimum criteria for effective mentor training.
2. Develop training modules for mentor training providers.
3. Conduct training for mentor training providers.

Status: These three activities will be accomplished in Year Two of the project. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) will assist in the completion of the following tasks:

- Establishment of minimum criteria for effective mentor training;
- Development of a training module for mentor training providers; and
- Facilitation of training workshops for mentor training providers.

Objective 4: To identify and approve mentor training providers. The state will undertake two activities to accomplish this objective:

1. Develop criteria for provider approval and a review and approval process.
2. Provide year-one orientation and ongoing program evaluation of provider offerings in subsequent years.

Status: These two activities will be completed in Year Two of the project. The New Jersey Professional Teaching Standards Board (NJPTSB) will assist in the design and establishment of criteria for a review and approval process. The project coordinator will work in collaboration with the board to provide orientation to the county and local professional development committees in the area of mentoring.

The evaluation component will assess the impact of the review and approval process, the outcomes of the ongoing orientations and mentor trainings provided throughout the state.

Objective 5: To provide funding for mentor training. The state will undertake two activities to accomplish this objective:

1. School districts will certify the number of mentor teachers annually.
2. The state will reimburse each district the prescribed mentoring training amount per mentor.

Status: These two objectives will be accomplished in Year Three of the project. The evaluation component will include the reporting of the number of mentor teachers trained and the amount of funding allocated to each district for mentor training.

IV. BUDGET INFORMATION

In Year One of the project, funds designated for the mentoring strand will be used for preliminary planning, research of best practices, purchase of consultant services, design of mentoring materials, and the development of web site-based technology resources, training and evaluation.

In Year 3 of the project, mentoring funds will be allocated to local public school districts for mentor training.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Not applicable.